

RICHARD J. DURBIN
ILLINOIS

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

COMMITTEE ON RULES
AND ADMINISTRATION

ASSISTANT DEMOCRATIC
LEADER

United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510-1304

March 14, 2007

332 DIRKSEN SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1304
(202) 224-2152
TTY (202) 224-8180

230 SOUTH DEARBORN, 38TH FLOOR
CHICAGO, IL 60604
(312) 353-4952

525 SOUTH EIGHTH STREET
SPRINGFIELD, IL 62703
(217) 492-4062

701 NORTH COURT STREET
MARION, IL 62959
(618) 998-8812

durbin.senate.gov

The Honorable Kevin J. Martin
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Martin:

I write to request that you expedite action on several petitions for eligible telecommunications carrier (ETC) status that have been filed by subsidiaries of U.S. Cellular Corporation. U.S. Cellular's ETC petitions have been pending before the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) for nearly three years.

My understanding is that the FCC has not acted upon ETC designation petitions in a timely manner for several years and that there are currently 34 such petitions pending at the Commission. In the case of U.S. Cellular, it is my understanding that the company has filed several ETC designation petitions in which it has committed to use universal service support to improve wireless infrastructure in rural areas.

While I share your concern that the federal Universal Service Fund (USF) must be prudently managed, I hope that these petitions will be acted upon within a reasonable time frame. Wireless consumers, including those in rural areas, contribute nearly \$3 billion into the federal fund each year. Those consumers deserve the health, safety, and economic development benefits that wireless services can deliver in our nation's rural areas.

I would be very grateful if you would give this matter your personal attention and act upon these petitions in a timely fashion. If the Commission is unwilling to take action on these petitions, I would appreciate the courtesy of an explanation.

Thank you very much for your time. Should you have any questions, please contact David Lazarus in my office.

Sincerely,



Richard J Durbin
U.S. Senator